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THE CHURCH AND THE YOUNG MAN'S GAME

F. J. MILNES





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THE CHURCH AND THE
YOUNG MAN'S GAME

F. J. MILNES, B.S.

THE NATIONAL INDOOR GAME ASSOCIATION

INCORPORATED

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BILLIARD ROOM IN CONNECTION WITH THE WEST PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

THE CHURCH AND THE YOUNG MAN'S GAME

BY

Frank
F. J. MILNES, B.S.

18
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PREFACE

In sending forth this little book, the writer makes no pretence at literary skill. He has simply tried to present in a straight-forward manner his honest convictions on the "Amusement Question"; he has suggested a legitimate workable means, which the church is well qualified and commissioned to employ, in order to win and hold young men; he has shown also how the same means may be employed by rural communities to check the deplorable migration of their brightest young people to the city, and to solve thereby one of the gravest problems of our times, touching the very life and manhood of the nation; and at the close he has cited a number of examples, together with one of his own, of the practical application of the aforesaid suggestions.

When you consider the millions of capital represented by our church edifices, the idea of allowing them to stand vacant and useless six-sevenths of the time does not appeal to the business spirit of our age as a very wise investment.

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If pastors will coöperate with the National Indoor Game Association they will be effectually assisted in forcing unscrupulous game-room keepers either out of business or into higher ideals of conducting it.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE INVASION OF A NEW IDEA

THE *National Indoor Game Association* was organized to safeguard the young man's leisure hours, to shield him from vice and low ideals where temptation assails him most, to ameliorate the atmosphere of his favorite games, and to make unwholesome game-rooms clean up or close up by the principle of substitution. Its power is bilateral and its method unique. It is the crystallization of a new discovery in coördination. It is the federation of forces which have hitherto misunderstood each other.

The big game equipment manufacturers are anxious, even if only for financial reasons, that the moral tone of billiard halls, bowling alleys, gymnasiums, etc., shall meet the approval of public ideals. These big concerns, of course,

will oppose and fight to the bitter end the prohibition of the games. But, if the churches and reformers will coöperate in the amelioration of the surrounding conditions, instead of the annihilation of the games themselves, and will help to place the games in clean moral environments under proper supervision in lieu of the places of ill-repute, these same manufacturers will do all in their power to assist in bringing about this mutually desired end.

It is the function of the National Indoor Game Association to unite these two forces in the common cause of *environmental salvation*. To act separately is usually to act antagonistically, the forces only counteracting each other with zero as the net result. Out of ten years of honest, measurably successful, though disappointing pastorate efforts to win young men, and out of observations of the efforts and methods of others made in different denominations from New England to the Pacific Coast, I have come to the conclusion that the church, acting alone, with an unsupplemented policy of restraint, is not putting on her whole armor. She is not using all the agencies, which she is

eminently qualified to employ, in order that her solution of the "amusement problem" may possess that general satisfaction and finality which shall at once maintain the dignity of her own sublime ideals and at the same time secure the confidence of the younger generation upon which she depends for the leadership of tomorrow. It is the aim of this book and of the *National Indoor Game Association* to assist the church to make sympathetic and practical efforts to offer adequate social substitutes for the "Good Fellowship" of the young man's questionable resorts.

Just now there is a movement to make the public schools the "social centers" with evening sessions of "Folklore" dances, games, etc. I tell you, brother ministers, we must make the *church* the "social center" or abandon hope of reaching the young people of our generation. You may differ from this opinion and criticize this book's point of view, but you will come to it before you win the young man of to-day.

When you consider the millions of capital represented by our church edifices, the idea of allowing them to stand vacant and useless six-

sevenths of the time does not appeal to the business spirit of our age as a very wise investment.

But this message is directed also to the "officials" and laymen, for upon their shoulders lies the brunt of the responsibility for the present deplorable situation. The younger and more progressive ministers endorse modern ideas and would gladly put them into practice. But their hands are often manacled by a certain minority upon whom in many cases the church unfortunately depends—or upon whom some people imagine it depends—for its financial support.

If under these or similar circumstances the pastor adopts a policy commensurate with modern demands, there soon follows "another siege for the minister's freight-racked furniture, another flitting experience for his homeless children, another proof of his wife's heroic love, and another scar on his own bewildered heart." Traditional methods hold the field. Money for any new departure in church activities is hard to raise. Fear of being discredited through failure and critical gossip awaits along

the unbeaten path. It should not be surprising, therefore, if the minister capitulates to things as they are and resigns himself to the ecclesiastical treadmill.

Nevertheless, progress in every sphere and direction is the child of the brave heroes who break the shackles of conformity and tyranny. And the church laymen and ministers, who break through the armor of ecclesiastical sanctity enough to fill the church basement with the merry laughter of young men at their favorite games in lieu of their present haunts and pastimes, will embrace thereby the greatest single opportunity for bringing in the Kingdom of God.

But where this is impracticable, the minister still has a splendid opportunity to improve the environment of young men's leisure hours,—and an ounce of improvement of leisure periods is equal, in character formation, to tons of reform of working periods. Pastors may not be aware, for instance, that there is a National Billiard Association, made up of various State organizations of the better class of game-room keepers, incorporated with a constitution which

forbids all manner of vice, gambling, "blind pigs," indecent language, the admission of boys under age without parental consent, etc. If pastors will coöperate with this association, they will be effectually assisted in forcing unscrupulous room keepers either out of business or into higher ideals of conducting it.

It may be objected that this association, as also the manufacturers of sporting goods, are interested in reform only as a business proposition or self-preservation. But this in no way excuses our culpability in failing to enlist that self-interest among the active assets of moral reformation. For self-interest is a fundamental law and legitimate force of life, growth, and all manner of moral progress. Self-interest, for instance, has made the railroads of to-day the most effectual temperance reformers of modern civilization. Self-interest, tactfully directed and appropriated, may become a force for good which it is a crime to despise, may indeed become the greatest moral power in the uplift of the human race. Why not use it?

Unless the present foreboding tendency is promptly reversed, the church will soon be bankrupt of masculinity.

CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH AND THE YOUNG MAN

THE INCIDENT AT NEGAUNEE

IN a small Michigan village is a most significant and somewhat startling spectacle. The young men of the town have formed an organization, the definite purpose of which is to oppose and defeat the church. They are actually pledged not to attend or support the church in any manner,—and all over the same old mooted question of amusements. The boys will play billiards, and the church is bent on the suppression of their favorite game. But the results were not what the Methodist Brotherhood had in mind when they initiated the abolition movement. Had they anticipated such an adverse response, they no doubt would have modified their method of procedure. It is another illustration of the theory of suppres-

sion as distinguished from that of substitution. Be that as it may, the results are a most pitiable contest between forces which should be as mother and son. And, while not generally demonstrated so ostensibly, this is becoming sadly typical of the relation between young men and the church everywhere. The decision in the case is that the church is right, the young man wins, and both lose simultaneously.

CHURCH BEREFT OF YOUNG MEN

Anyhow, the church to-day is bereft of young men. Who denies this only proclaims he doesn't care. By actual count of the church attendance at twenty-two of the leading Protestant churches of Chicago, with a total membership of 12,840, it was observed by investigation, under my direction, that the total attendance at the morning service of these churches on a recent pleasant Sunday was 5,982, and of this number only 216 were young men,—less than 2 per cent. of the enrollment, and less than 4 per cent. of the actual attendance. It appears, therefore, that the young



A \$70,000 INVESTMENT USELESS SIX-SEVENTHS OF THE TIME

men who attend church to-day are almost statistically negligible.

The Rev. Dr. Blake, Secretary of Methodist Sunday Schools, speaking before the "Conferences" of his denomination from the Atlantic to the Pacific, is sounding the alarm that "as soon as boys get into long pants they leave the Sunday school and are lost to the church." To "get by" the portent of this tendency the Doctor is admonishing pastors: "Bait your hooks with the things boys bite at."

TIME FOR ACTION

The advice is timely. For, unless the present foreboding tendency is promptly reversed, the church will soon be bankrupt of masculinity. This should sting the most lethargic into action. There is no time for parley or hairsplitting discussions on the orthodoxy of methods. Procrastination only permits the conditions to ossify. Deliberations frequently serve as a convenient exhaust through which to relieve a disturbing conscience, and in the Potter's Field of time rest the forms of too many noble impulses.

The thing most needed just now is action. We are not dealing with what ought to be, but what is. Young men ought to come to church, but they don't. They ought to keep the Sabbath sacred, but they don't. They ought not leave the wholesome country life for the allurements of the city, but they do in alarmingly increasing numbers. We may preach and admonish, but they are either absent or deaf. There is a "screw loose" somewhere. There is some primary requirement arising out of the unique conditions, surrounding the young men to-day, which the church is apparently not meeting. It is not a question of who is right or who is to blame; it is a question of practical expediency in meeting a crisis. Without attempting any defense, it is enough, for those of us who love the church, to know that, from the young men's point of view at least, she is not "making good" in what they instinctively feel they legitimately require. Consequently, though unintentionally, they do worse than fight or persecute the church. They *ignore* it. They literally pay no attention to it. The question is, therefore, what "bait" can the church

use which young men are biting at to-day? What distinctly urgent requirement can she meet?

SUCCESSFUL METHODS OF THE PAST

The church has reached men in the past through a series of readjustments in the light of new and ever changing conditions. Every great historical growth the church has made can be traced to the fine sensibility of her spiritual antennæ by which she has detected the deep specific need of any particular period, and then adapted herself to meet that need.

This is seen in her great spiritual awakenings. Religion in the sixteenth century, for instance, had become little more than blind obedience to authority. It had grown languid and lacking in spontaneity. Martin Luther's *justification by faith* supplied that need, and the great Reformation followed. In the seventeenth century came the much needed and well adapted Puritan Revival with its doctrine on the *Sovereignty of God*. In the eighteenth century religion had become again impersonal and ritualistic. John Wesley supplied the miss-

ing note by his *personal salvation* and *witness of the Spirit*, and the resulting growth of the church was phenomenal. In the first half of the nineteenth century Charles G. Finney emphasized another required phase of truth, *man's free moral agency and guilt*. This also gave the church another wonderful impetus. In the latter half of the nineteenth century the scientific spirit had so developed that the one thing needed and nearly forgotten was *love*, the most essential element of religion. This was supplied by the spirit and preaching of Dwight Lyman Moody; and, because he met the underlying specific need of the times, he initiated a wonderful "revival" and won the most adherents of any man of his century.

FUTURE PROGRAM OF CHURCH

In the light of that principle, therefore, through the exercise of which the church has flourished in the past, what should be her policy and program in the future? Students of the life and spirit of Jesus are agreed that when He inquired of humanity, "Wilt thou be made whole?" his words had a wider application

than the historical incident which furnished the immediate occasion of their utterance. In that eternal interrogation he announced the slogan for the future program of the church. The function of Christianity was to touch the fragmentary life of mankind and make it whole,—to build up complete symmetrical character.

The church has executed this program by sections as the development of the race has required. At each succeeding stage of human evolution some new capacity, instinct, or relationship has developed and asserted its claims; and, as already shown, whenever the church has adjusted herself to meet those claims, she has acquired a corresponding increase of accessions and power. On the other hand, whenever the church has disinherited any legitimate portion of human nature, she has only shared her proprietorship with another; and such joint interest has always been disastrous to the church. She was commissioned to develop the whole man, and whenever she has not fully carried out that commission, she has merely permitted her opportunity to pass into other hands.

CHURCH HESITATES AND SUFFERS LOSS

The church to-day, for instance, is confronted by the insistent and unprecedented demands of the instinct for play. But in the presence of this new challenge she is hesitating. Her former method of readjustment and expansion, by which in the past she so triumphantly met the characteristic requirement of each recurring age, has apparently been arrested. No doubt, there is some justification for this reluctance. The church remembers the unpleasantness of the struggle through which she threw off the narrowness and prejudice of the times and installed musical instruments in her services. She recalls, too, with what bitterness she was opposed when she embraced the child within her prerogative, founded the Sunday School, and heroically proclaimed to the self-righteous Pecksniffs who have done their worst in every age to impede her progress that children are not "born lost," but rather, on the contrary, are "already in the Kingdom."

But even while these reflections give her

pause, even since she has hesitated, the results show an unspeakable loss to the church and the initiation of a subtle supplanting process manifested in the rise and growth of other institutions. What new and larger influence the church might have acquired, for instance, had she initiated and mothered the recent "playground" movement and centered it about herself, instead of leaving it wholly to the municipalities!

It is unfortunate, too, that the church did not make more immediate response to the object-lesson displayed in the birth and phenomenal growth of the Y. M. C. A., a monumental testimony to the reward awaiting the institution which promptly adapts itself to meet the primary requirement of the times.

Moreover, the "Men and Religion Forward Movement," even though it did nothing else, was worth while in that it taught us what the business men believe is now the supreme opportunity of the church. Their plea was unanimous that the church must again adapt herself to meet the requirements of new conditions. Among the most common suggestions was that

of an "open house," during several evenings of each week, providing young men's favorite games and social recreations.

DEEPER INQUIRY INTO PLAY

The incident at Negaunee, therefore, together with the foregoing facts relative to the present general situation and an ardent desire to learn whether recreation is not the next imperative activity which the church must feature in her ever evolving program, leads us to inquire more seriously into the essential nature of the play instinct itself. If it is inherently wicked, let us all assist the church to destroy it. If it is inherently legitimate and exists as a biological function in development, let us enlist it in the service of morality and character.



A CHURCH WHICH SERVES THE COMMUNITY EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK IS REWARDED BY A CHANCE
TO PREACH TO YOUNG MEN ON SUNDAY.

The play instinct is as primary and irresistible as the instinct for food. A play-room in every home is therefore as essential as a dining room.

CHAPTER III

PLAY COMPARED WITH OTHER MEANS OF GROWTH

A PRIMARY INSTINCT

THE craving for amusement, says Karl Gross in "The Play of Man," is as fundamental and irresistible as the craving for food. We come into the world with two primary instincts, hunger and playfulness. Which antecedes the other is not certain. But in the course of human evolution, the exercise of the game impulse has had a large part in developing the highest coördination between man's physical and mental natures. Moreover, this coördination, or, more specifically, the subjection of the body to human volition, furnishes the basis of morality. A prompt muscular response to volition is the basis of self-control, and self-control is the basis of character. That is to say, games are

a preparation for life. Long prior to any sense of obligation toward work, the child gets his elementary ideas of form and color, cause and effect, pain and pleasure, as well as his sense of relationship, justice and integrity, through play activities. We learn to live by play, and that, too, from ideal methods of instruction. Nature has here provided a pleasant means of equipping us for life's duties without our knowing it. Memory, imagination, concentration, and attention are irksome of cultivation except as they spontaneously arise as a "by-product" of play. Indeed, it is because the routine of developing these mental powers, when dissociated from the play attitude, is tedious and irksome, that such capacities and facilities are so rarely attained.

Psychologically speaking, there is always a sensation or conscious state accompanying a sensory impact upon the nerve centers; these nerve centers transmit the current of energy resulting from such impact to the muscles and organs of the body; and, when such sensation is most pleasant, the simultaneous current of energy encounters least resistance in its course

and therefore obtains the greatest response per unit of energy from the muscles and organs to which it is directed. The most enjoyable game, therefore, produces a maximum degree of the conservation of energy. In short, the spirit and exercise of play is an economic instrument of growth.

WORK INSUFFICIENT

Contrary to the old traditional opinion, more rapid, vigorous and symmetrical development takes place under the stimulus of play than under that of toil. The only exception to this is that in which the task is so fittingly adapted as to become itself a form of pleasure or actual amusement. Phillips Brooks said: "It's fun to be a minister." But this play attitude was undoubtedly cultivated through the play activities of his earlier life.

I am not unaware that the highest ideals of labor are inclusive of something more than an effort to produce food. We toil not only to make something to eat, but to make something to look at and to listen to, things of beauty to enjoy forever, etc. We work in order that we

may live, not merely in animal existence, but, as Ruskin puts it, that we may "live in the higher lobes of our being." All of which is very beautiful and very true. But it is not entirely comprehensible, not to mention practical, among a large majority of that portion of the human race which gives seriousness to the problem herein under consideration. Moreover, when we rise above mere "bread-and-butter" labor, we find that the workmen of this class have attained their higher level through the exercise of the play attitude. The musician, sculptor and painter all live in the spirit and attitude of play, and through the exercise of that spirit alone do they rise to the ranks of genius.

Occasionally some exceptionally gifted or peculiarly constituted mind like John Ruskin acquires the play attitude through self-abandonment in labor activities. A prominent Chicago manufacturer says of his work: "I'm having the time of my life here in my office. It's because I make business a game. Something I enjoy playing. Business is my fun. When things appear to be going bad, it makes it all

the more interesting. I am not exaggerating it a bit when I say that I look forward to coming to work in the morning. . . . Business worry me? I might worry as a man would in making a hard shot in a billiard game, but in no more serious fashion than that. My attitude may have had something to do with my success. At any rate, I have never been able to get the viewpoint of the man who looked at business as a 'grind.' "

But such men, either in the fine arts or in the business world, are very exceptional. The play attitude is acquired by most mortals only by actual engagement and recreation in games.

A mind like Balzac, having spent all his money for his mansion and unable to buy any furniture for it, might furnish it with his rich imagination. Here, in his mind's eye, hung a great picture, there stood a rich cabinet, yonder a superb table, etc. A similar genius might imagine that work is play, and cultivate the play attitude toward everything without the agency of games. But such gifted mortals are only substituting imagination for games, and, therefore, every psychological influence of game

participation is brought to bear upon their attitude just as if the play activities were real. In the last analysis, therefore, the play attitude of life is cultivated only by play activities, even though the reality of such play activities exists merely in mental concept.

But, we repeat that all such considerations have but little application to that rank and file of youthful and untutored humanity which constitutes the burden of our plea. To the average young man in whose behalf these lines are written work is work and play is play, each having its own place and performing its own distinct function. And to these respective functions we now wish to pay a little further tribute.

If work makes a wealthy man, play makes a complete man. Play develops certain characteristics or portions of human personality which do not readily respond to the stimulus of toil. "All work and no play makes Jack" not only "a dull boy," but a partial boy. "Man plays," says Schiller, "only when he is human and reaches full humanity only when he plays." Work and the necessities of life develop only a small part of our instinctive resources. Games

of pure skill involve infinite combinations, unexpected turns, ever changing angles, and varied gradations of force. Work, on the other hand, consists largely of routine and the repetition of very similar, if not identical, movements, developing only the same limited muscles and neglecting other parts and organs equally important.

Work is a necessity; play is a pleasure. Work is endured; play is enjoyed. The joy of work exists rarely, save in the minds of poets and dreamers, who have never experienced the drudgery of common labor. John Ruskin may sing of "our pleasure growing out of our work like the color petals from a fruitful flower." But as we see it down on earth,—in Chicago, for instance,—as we observe it among the "hands on the farm," the "paddies" on the railroad, or among the clerks and office "force" of business in the monotonous grind of everlasting toil, work would not be tolerated, were it not the only means of getting the necessities of life. Captain John Smith said, "He who will not work may not eat"—and that is the reason men work to-day. In these days, how-

ever, thanks to Heaven and the Labor Union, we don't work so many hours. Moreover, if work were not interspersed with play, more employees would seek relief from life's weary turmoil through drugs, alcohol, and the lake. If labor makes life worth money, play makes life worth while. Work has its place, no doubt, but human nature will either "live by the way" or cease to be.

UNSUPPLEMENTED SCHOOLING INADEQUATE

If, then, the time revered agency of toil is not the best instrument in the development of character, whence shall we look for it? Educators make strong claims for the moralizing effects of school training. "But," says Stanley Hall, "I cannot find a single criminologist who speaks optimistically of the modern school." There are too many educated criminals. It has been my privilege to address the prisoners in some of our State penitentiaries, and one could not ask for a more intelligent audience. Here are found some of the keenest business men, expert scientists, and most highly educated bankers and lawyers.



CLASS OF GIRLS IN GYMNASIUM OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
WINNETKA, ILLINOIS.



GYMNASIUM OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WINNETKA, ILLINOIS.

Judge Gemmill of the Chicago Court of Domestic Relations recently declared in an address before a church club that the popular idea that education is an antidote for crime is a mistake.

Even if we grant that educated criminals are exceptional and hold ignorance to be the mother of vice and crime, still the school falls short as a moralizing agent. Waiving, as mere exaggerations, all the charges that have been made so frequently during the past few years to the effect that our college spirit to-day encourages inebriety, cigarettes, gambling, irreverence, and religious agnosticism, we are none the less confronted with a statistical situation which makes it obviously unreasonable to suppose that the schools, under present conditions and unsupplemented by other influences, can solve the "young man" problem. How, for instance, can the school train and develop the character of the young man whom it never touches, the youth who disdains to darken its doors? And he represents the overwhelming majority.

Just at the formative period of adolescence,

when the boy needs supervising influences most, just as he stands on the splendid, dangerous threshold of manhood, suddenly the school and the boy part company. Five out of every six of the enrollment of boys and girls leave school during this period. Of the 19,000,000 school children enrolled in the elementary grades, only 3,000,000 go through high school. Furthermore, since a much larger number of boys than girls leave, it follows that the loss of boys, taken by themselves, is considerably more than five out of every six. The actual number of boys who come under the influence of the schools during adolescence, therefore, is appreciably less than one-sixth of the masculine enrollment of the elementary grades. In view of the percentage of this number who become educated criminals, moreover, together with the much larger percentage who do not attain the moral standard which our civilization has a right to expect, it is apparent that the school is successful in actually moralizing only a seriously reduced portion of the aforesaid, appreciably less than one-sixth of the elementary enrollment of boys.

An even worse situation is found when we consider the relation between the boy and the Sunday school. According to the Rev. Edgar Blake, corresponding secretary of the Board of Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church, boys attend Sunday school only until they reach their "teens," when they abruptly disappear. "This is the age," says Dr. Blake, "when boys break with their parents, their faith, and their former ideals; and just when they need the Sunday school most, they are gone." According to this leading expert, therefore, so far as the Sunday school is concerned, as it is now situated and conducted, the "young man" problem is scarcely touched.

PUNISHMENT DOES NOT REFORM

But if our schools are not the most effective antidote for crime, neither is our system of correction. The reform school does not reform. It merely protects the public from the misdemeanors of those whom it imprisons.

"For want of better institutions our delinquent boys are sent to the penitentiaries or re-

form schools, where, instead of being restored to the community, they become criminals through association with hardened law-breakers.”*

If Professor Yoder is right that “adolescence is attended by a spirit of semi-criminality among normal healthy boys,” † then restraint, suppression, and prohibition only antagonize the boy’s essential nature. But methods of antagonism will never get very far in the world either of reform or prevention.

What the boy needs during this crisis of life is intelligent, sympathetic direction without the knowledge that he is being guided. Experts in juvenile work everywhere employ some judicious means of directing the boy without his knowing it. The instinct to be an independent, initiative force appears during adolescence in the most exaggerated manifestations. This instinct should be appreciated and directed, not antagonized or suppressed. Suppression only agitates the very tendencies we seek to control.

* Chicago Tribune editorial, March 9, 1913.

† “The Incurables.” Prof. Yoder. (*Journal of Childhood and Adolescence*, January, 1902.)

A boy is a boiler of energies, he is looking for an outlet or an occasion for the expression of those energies, and he may find it in the wrong way. But if we suppress those energies, there is apt to be an explosion later that will shock the community.

Parents who whip and scold and punish most severely usually have the worst boys as a result. Certainly there is no statistical evidence to support the theory that a boy is good in direct proportion to the severity of his parental chastisement.

Few parents are aware of the danger with which these adolescence years are fraught. One psychologist estimates that seventy-five per cent. of the serious temptations of life are crowded into this brief period of tender years and erratic emotionalism with almost irresistible intensity. Untrained parents and guardians do not realize that most of our criminals become such when only boys. Judge John Newcomer of the Municipal Court of Chicago says: "Seventy per cent. of those brought before me are under twenty years of age." The average age of the "holdup" characters of the city is

about nineteen years. In the fifty-eight juvenile reformatories in the United States, with 14,846 inmates, the average age is 14.2 years. "Adolescence is preëminently the criminal age . . . and the proportion seems to be everywhere increasing."*

It is not the purpose here, however, to enter into a technical discussion of punishment as a cure for juvenile crime. Instead the conclusions of the authorities who have given exhaustive consideration to those respective fields of research are accepted as correct and final, and the merit of my recommendations is based upon them. The conclusions upon this subject, moreover, are succinctly summarized by Stanley Hall in the following brief statement: "Those smitten with the institutional craze or any extreme correctionalist views will never solve the problem of criminal youth."†

PLAYLESS HOME LOSES BOYS

Mere disciplinary agencies are inadequate to secure the highest development of his majesty,

* Adolescence. Stanley Hall, p. 325.

† Ibid., p. 407.

the modern boy. This is illustrated, as has been shown, in the activities of church, school, and State.

But it is even more apparent in the greatest of all American institutions, the home. Here, if anywhere, are the forces that shape manners and morals. If we cannot keep our sons contented to remain at home during the formative period at least, we may well despair of preserving the moral standards of American civilization. But filial contentment requires something besides the ding-dong of duty, and the customary deluge of don'ts. Prohibition of the amusement halls and the young man's place of social recreation only dissatisfies the young man with his rural vicinity and frequently drives him to the city. Provide his favorite amusements in his home, but if you cannot afford what he craves, seek to improve and not to destroy such recreations in the local community.

No one appreciates recreations in the home more than those who have tried it. Here is a line from just a plain mother. (Mrs. Mary B. Britton, Wilbut, Wash.) "When we at-

tempt to make plain to you what pleasure our billiard table has brought to us, words fail, and we can only say, *our boy now lives at home*. Why can't the American mother be as wise as the Japanese mother and place a billiard table in her home? The Japanese have never attempted to rank in classic design, but in the art of training their children to stay at home the Japanese mother has never been excelled."

Just as recreations will check migration to the city from country towns, the same attractions will have the same effects in the relationship between smaller units, the boy and the home. No home is complete without games. It would be difficult to mention a sacrifice which parents could make for their boy which would yield them better returns upon the investment than in the purchase of his favorite game for the home. If the instinct for play is as primary and irresistible as the instinct for food, then a playroom in every home is as essential as a dining room.

Play is religion's basic ally, and it is high time the church was marshaling all her forces. Religion can never wholly take the place of play, and should not wage her battles without its aid. Beware of a religion that substitutes itself for everything; that makes monks. Seek a religion that appropriates everything; that makes Christians.



MEN'S BILLIARD ROOM IN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
WINNETKA, ILLINOIS.



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND "COMMUNITY BUILDING,"
WINNETKA, ILLINOIS.

CHAPTER IV

THE FUNCTION OF GAMES

"BY-PRODUCTS"

IN comparing play activities with other agencies of human growth, it appears, therefore, that such other agencies are inadequate in themselves for symmetrical development; that it is a part of Nature's order of things that they should be supplemented by play; that play stimulates distinct qualities and virtues, not fully attained through work, schooling or correction.

Among the "by-products" of play, which are developed only rarely or partially by other agencies, might be mentioned the spirit of spontaneity, wholeheartedness, self-abandonment, elation, enthusiasm, exuberance, etc. The habit of accuracy, also, is perhaps nowhere so unconsciously and naturally developed as in those enjoyable games in which accuracy is the paramount essential to achievement. A game,

for instance, in which the most accurate shots are the most admired shots is an ideal agency for developing the habit of accuracy, which in turn becomes the basis of integrity and justice. Furthermore, in the contribution which play makes to character building, the physical is emphasized coextensively with mental and moral growth for the reason that a healthy body is the basis of a healthy mind and soul. Dr. George J. Fisher, international secretary of the Y. M. C. A., says: "An unfortunately large number of our population haven't the physical basis of being good." Games begin their building processes, where all sound constructive forces must, at the foundation. In fact, "all that is best and beautiful in nature can be taught through play, its ever changing conditions and situations." (Play; Its Value. Nina B. Lamkin, p. 26.) And the boy who acquires these virtues through games to-day will exercise them in business to-morrow.

TRAINS BOY UNAWARES

There are other functions and virtues in the performance and development of which play

enjoys more nearly a monopoly. One of these is emphasized by the experts in juvenile work who assure us how desirable it is to correct and train the boy without his knowing it, to employ methods of suggestions which permit him to believe that the suggestions are his own, and thus to avoid the fatal antagonism of his strong initiative instinct. This ideal recipe for making boys good is rather difficult in practice, and capable of execution only by trained experts. In games, however, we have a method, most simple and natural, which executes itself automatically. No skilled boy trainers are here required. Just turn the boys loose on a good wholesome game and the trick is done. The boys adopt it wholeheartedly. Here they develop self-control, imagination, memory, concentration, and attention; here they expand their lungs, increase their circulation and develop muscles in strength and agility; here they subdue their passions and refine their intellect; here is "the expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature,"—and all in a most happy unawareness, without the sense of compulsion or drudgery and

elated only by a delicious anticipation of the next unexpected turns of the game.

SAFEGUARDS LEISURE HOURS

Again, one prominent characteristic of our day is the decreased daily hours of toil. Modern machinery now does the work in a few hours which formerly occupied days, thus placing at our disposal an ever-increasing leisure. This feature, however, is only conditionally desirable. Leisure, like most things, however good inherently, is desirable according as it is used or abused. Leisure consumed in idleness is a fruitful source of either laziness or mischief. Certain intervals of leisure are a positive necessity to the health of body and soul, but "an idle brain is the Devil's workshop." Unoccupied leisure is a hazardous situation for fertile juvenile minds. Some game of sufficient interest as to engage the whole attention is usually a prerequisite of good behavior among virile youth who have leisure hours at their disposal. J. H. Bancroft, director of physical training for the public schools of New York

City, says: "Many principals object to recesses because of the moral contamination for which these periods are often responsible. The author, however, has had repeated and convincing testimony of the efficacy of games to do away with this objection."*

COUNTERACTS SEDENTARY HABITS

Another conspicuous tendency of our civilization is the enormous migration from country toward city life. The result of this movement means the loss of outdoor exercise, more intense mental application, competition, worry and exhaustion of nerve. Such a change can only mean a lamentable loss of vitality. But here again games come to the rescue. In proportion as the race becomes sedentary games become indispensable. They are, indeed, Mother Nature's wise and happy provision for checking and counteracting the devitalizing tendencies of our sedentary habits.

* Games for Playground, Home, School and Gymnasium.
—J. H. Bancroft.

CHECKS MIGRATION TO CITY

Moreover, there is no one thing that will check the lamentable movement cityward so much as a wise provision for wholesome amusements in the rural districts. I have asked dozens of young men why they left their country homes, inferring that it was for money and business opportunity. But the reply is invariably: "Nothing doing," "Too dead for me," referring, not to business, but to recreation. That is, village life is not large enough for them. It does not meet the normal requirements of their whole nature.

Rural editors appreciate this fact: "Perhaps you know that the one thing which worries a great many of the best people we have in this country is the fact that the boys and girls are leaving the farm to go to the city. Only recently we have come to appreciate the fact that possibly the reason they are going is that country life has not furnished them the recreation which their natures require, and they are going to places where this need can be supplied. Personally I believe that every community, if not

every farm home, should have a clubhouse where boys can play billiards and have the relaxation which they require. If this were done, I think there would be less of a desire to go to town, and also I believe that they would do more efficient work.”*

Having followed up the record of a certain definite “bunch” of young men who formerly constituted a Sunday School Class in a rural church, and having inquired their reasons for not attending the class or the church any more, the writer received nine replies from the twelve young men. Every reason but one given could be expressed in the words of one in particular: “Oh, there is nothing doing out there but preach.”

One country pastor saw this situation, came to a rural church and conquered. Rev. M. B. McNutt of Plainfield, Illinois, has demonstrated the efficacy of games to bind young men to country life. The church which he accepted paid a salary of \$300.00 per annum, was then \$400.00 in arrears, and had not received a new

* James M. Irvine (Managing Editor, Fruit Grower and Farmer, St. Joseph, Mo.).

member in a half-decade. As a result of the new pastor's régime of athletic organization, bowling, billiards, basketball, punching-bags, etc., the church is in a most flourishing condition, with hardly a young person in the entire vicinity but is a member. During this pastorate the church has given to benevolence \$5,600 as compared with \$600 given for a similar purpose in the sixty-six years preceding. . . . A new \$10,000 church has been erected and paid for.*

But these statistics do not express the far-reaching achievement of this wise pastor. He struck upon a solution of one of the gravest problems of our times. The provision and supervision of recreations in rural communities and villages as a means of holding boys in the country until they are well established in moral fiber, judgment and stability of character is one of the most consequential movements of modern reform. It is fundamental to the character of our nation's manhood to stimulate country towns to become thoroughly alive to

* "Saving the Country Church." (Country Gentleman, Dec. 28th, 1912.)

this serious matter, to devise means of every legitimate nature, and even to make certain concessions to the young man's social requirements and taste, in order to keep the strongest types and most promising youth in the rural communities, from which this nation must draw most of its statesmen, if it is to have many, in the future.

BECOMES A "MEANS OF GRACE"

Not only are games the best means of growth, physical and moral; not only do they meet the highly desirable requirement of training and governing the boy without his knowing it; not only are they peculiarly essential to the leisure hours, the counteraction of sedentary habits and of the cityward drift of our times; —but modern Psychology has given to games a new and deeper significance. In the *Am. Journal of Theology*, Vol. 14, p. 509, Professor E. C. Seashore, of Iowa State University, says: "Games are a preparation for religious life and a vital means of its realization. . . . In order to understand religion, we must know

something of the biological rôle of play." Many of the emotions, basilar to religion, like elation, spontaneity, initiative, and the impetus to act for the joy of action, are most efficiently developed through play activities. The church, therefore, should appropriate and utilize this potent factor in human evolution. For ages the church has busied herself with the Theology of Tears, it should now deal seriously with the Theology of Play. Play is religion's basic ally, and it is high time she was marshaling all her forces. Religion can never wholly take the place of play, and should not try to win world battles without its aid. Beware of a religion that substitutes itself for everything; that makes monks. Seek a religion that appropriates everything; that makes Christians.

Play is a diversion of the life-force from sordid getting and possessing gratifications to something healthful and humanizing. Games are the expression of that diversion. As such they are handmaids to religion. A boy is a boiler of playful energies. Suppress those energies and there is danger of an explosion. Juvenile depravity is lack of outlet. Supply that



CLASS OF GIRLS IN GYMNASIUM OF "COMMUNITY HOUSE," WINNETKA, ILLINOIS.

outlet, and the result is moral salvation. Such is the function of games, and the church should utilize this practical *means of grace*. The young man's favorite game is the halter by which he may be led, and the Church that lays hold of it not only leads the young man but incidentally seizes her own life-preserver.

CHAPTER V

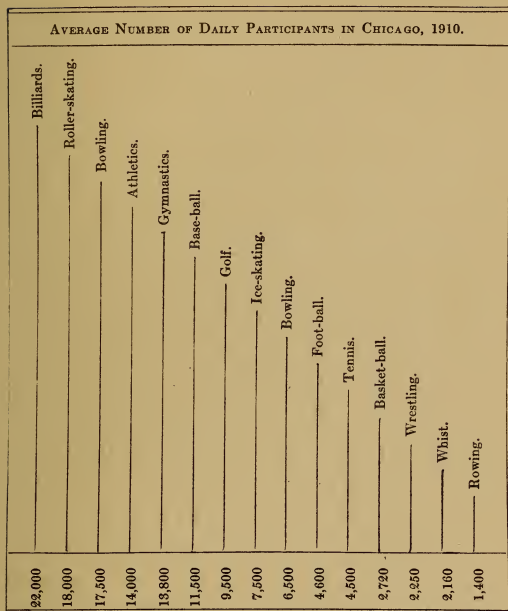
INDOOR GAMES COMPARED

BILLIARDS OUR NATIONAL GAME

THE psychologist has known these things for some time, but the Church is just beginning to recognize the principle. There should be a prompt and general movement in this direction. Give the boys their favorite games. Do not dictate their games to them, but provide the games they love, the games that have power to attract.

What, then, is the young man's favorite game? For, if we can enlist that game as our ally, we can take the young man by storm. As a result of considerable investigation to learn what is America's most popular game, therefore, we are enabled to exhibit the following chart.

There is a total of 300,000 carom and pocket-billiard tables in the public billiard



rooms of the United States, with a total daily average of 2,400,000 games played on these tables, and requiring an army of 9,600,000 players every day of the week.

Why abandon all the most highly evolved and masculine games to the devil? Billiards,

for instance, the game of pure skill, involving the least element of chance or luck, the game of greatest magnetism for young men, as is indicated in this chart, is still, in many quarters, under the ban of the Church. This antipathy is hard to appreciate. Henry Ward Beecher, Alfred Tennyson, Samuel Clemens, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Jefferson were expert in the art of billiards; while all our Presidents have indulged in this pastime in the billiard parlor of the Executive Mansion; moreover, in this country to-day there are over fifty prominent clergymen who not only play, but who have become highly proficient in "the gentleman's game." If the game is sometimes the center of bad associations and is attracting young men there, it is all the greater reason for placing it in clean surroundings where its magnetism will change the direction of the young man's drift.

Billiards is inherently the most wholesome of all indoor games, notwithstanding the prejudice which the devil's efforts to monopolize it have excited in the minds of many good people. It combines in harmonious proportion an ideal

physical and mental exercise. Checkers and chess are also mathematical games of pure science, but they afford no physical exercise, no training for eye or nerve. They are entirely sedentary. In all such games as dominoes, as in all card games, whether Flinch or Poker, the player is dependent somewhat upon luck in drawing his "hand." They are to that extent games of chance rather than of science. Since they offer, therefore, but little mental and almost no physical exercise, they are not the most wholesome games. Indoor baseball and basketball, while somewhat violent for the ordinary constitution, are fine games for robust youth. But they are impracticable without a large hall or gymnasium. Boxing is a splendid sport, but must be scrutinously supervised. Fencing is ideal and too little known and practiced in this country. Pure exercisers, such as dumb-bells, wands, horizontal bars, etc., lack the zest and sustaining interest of the spirit of games.

But billiards happily combines the good features of these games without many of their faults. It can be played in the home, or in the church basement where the pillars interfere

with and the ceiling is too low for basketball, etc.; and, while it can be indulged in by both men and women, athletic or frail, young or old, it is particularly attractive to the normal young man.

In the course of each game of billiards the player usually walks approximately forty rods and thrusts his arm forward from 50 to 100 times, holding a twenty-ounce cue, while at the same time estimating all manner of angles and calculating the resultant of varied gradations and combinations of force.

MORAL EFFICACY OF BILLIARDS

Billiards intrinsically exerts also a high moral influence. It discounts chance and puts a premium on accuracy. It demands a keen eye, a steady nerve, and a sensitive touch,—the very qualities which can be acquired only by abstemious habits of life. It is literally impossible for a “boozier” or a cigarette “fiend” to become proficient at billiards. And, since the game stimulates a strong desire to excel, it inclines the player to resist dissolute tempta-

tions in order that he may acquire proficiency.

Many of the great poets, like many of the world-renowned musicians and artists, are shockingly delinquent in their morals. Byron, Burns, Field, Riley and Poe (not to mention Goethe)—contrast these five great inebriate poets and their dissolute habits with the world's five greatest billiard artists—Hoppe, Demarest, Slosson, Yamada, and Sutton. Every one of these men are absolutely "total abstainers." This is a wholesome reflection for those who are prejudiced against the one indoor game which has the attractive qualities to draw young men.

"POOL" A MISNOMER

One cause of prejudice against billiards arises from the common use of a misnomer. The public read, for instance, of certain crimes and misdemeanors occurring in a "pool" room, and carry the impression that the item refers to a game room; when in reality such events never happened in any billiard hall, and were in no way connected with the game of billiards. (This, of course, is not saying that there are

no unwholesome billiard-rooms,—far from it.) The better class of billiard-room keepers have sought to eliminate this confusion by dropping the word “pool” in connection with their business. Pool is not a game, but is applied to the game of billiards by some through ignorance. It is a wise move that the proprietors of billiard halls throughout the country are making—eliminating the word “pool” from anything connected with their business. The word has become obnoxious because many persons do not understand, when reading of the poolroom in connection with the race-horse gambling and other forms of chance, that a billiard-room is an entirely different thing. There is nothing in common, and to speak of a billiard parlor as a pool hall is a great mistake. The pool-room is the resort of gamblers who are there to wager money and for that purpose only. There are no games there, except perhaps some dice. All the paraphernalia necessary for a pool-room is a telegraph instrument, a pencil, a pad of paper, and money to wager. It is no wonder the billiard-hall men see the advisability of not using the word “pool” as a name for pocket

billiards, because of the unsavory meaning generally given the word "pool."

All the tables for social games in a billiard hall are billiard tables, and all games played thereon are games of billiards—pocket billiards and carom. Like the great American game of baseball, the game of billiards has had a splendidly clean record, and it is rightfully called the "gentleman's game," because of that record. This is evidenced by the fact that in all the great Y. M. C. A. buildings in the country, as also in many of our best homes, a room is devoted to this most beautiful and entertaining of games.

Allow me to refer to one of my own experiments as a pastor: Placed indoor games in basement of Church. Results that year: Sunday School attendance doubled. Over eighty boys and young men gathered in the gymnasium. Frequent complaints from saloons and cigar stores that their patronage had fallen off. My substitution theory worked.



ASSOCIATE PASTOR PREACHING TO BOYS AND GIRLS AT SAME HOUR THE PASTOR IS PREACHING
TO HIS ADULT CONGREGATION IN THE AUDITORIUM ADJOINING, SUNDAY MORNING.

CHAPTER VI

BILLIARDS IN CHURCH

CHURCH ENTITLED TO THE BEST

IT has been shown that the church is not reaching young men; that work, schooling and chastisement need supplementing; that games perform unique and essential functions; that they actually become an ally of the church; and, finally, that, of all indoor games, billiards is perhaps the most purely scientific and beneficial, physically and morally, and the most magnetic to young men.

I therefore recommend that this game in particular be taken over and employed by the church, if for no other reason than that the church is entitled to the best.

Time was when I feared lest church billiard parlors would only be stepping-stones to disreputable billiard rooms. But after considerable investigation I have become convinced that

for one young man who will learn to play billiards at the church parlors and afterward enjoy the foul atmosphere of unwholesome billiard rooms, there are now thousands of young men learning to play billiards in undesirable places because the church does not provide such games. Furthermore, the young man who will learn at the church and afterward enjoy the game in low associations is quite likely to be the same young man who will not hesitate to learn in bad surroundings if he cannot learn elsewhere. So we have not injured but only improved his opportunity to be manly by teaching him at the church instead of leaving the devil to teach him.

CHURCH MUST MEET COMPETITION OF SALOON

Furthermore, there are positive and imperative reasons why the church should install this magnetic game.

First, the competition of the church with the saloon for the patronage of young men is open and active. If the church would win, she must certainly provide an adequate substitute for the

legitimate functions which the saloon performs, and for the agencies by which the saloon supplies a deeply felt need and necessary requirement, especially in the larger cities.

From a survey of seventy American cities the following facts have been ascertained concerning the saloon: Forty per cent. of the saloons serve free lunch. One in three has cards, games, bowling alleys, billiard tables. One in ten has café or hotel accommodations; one in twenty a clubroom; two in each hundred a dance hall. Fifteen per cent. of the labor unions meet in halls connected with saloons, and ten per cent. on Sunday. In seventy cities only one labor union was found meeting in a church.

In other words, the saloon is feeding people, amusing them, taking care of them. It cashes the workman's pay-check, helps him find a job when he is out of work, takes care of him in trouble. He may be arrested for a misdemeanor—a single lapse from order and industry of the sort that makes up a large proportion of arrests. The saloon-keeper and the political boss adjust matters for him. Their methods may not be very regular; but they weigh his

offense in a rough way, do not lose sight of the fact that he is ordinarily a pretty good fellow, and get him out of the police station with a fine regard for his self-respect. The saloon in its field is effective, very human and always on the job.*

In the face of such statistics as these, what is the use of talking of driving the saloon out of our large cities until the church offers an adequate substitute? One conspicuous feature brought to light by this survey is the importance with which the saloon regards recreation and games. But since these things are inherently legitimate and beneficial, the church should at least not be outdone in meeting this demand.

Paul M. Strayer, "Social Expert" from Rochester, N. Y., in the Men and Religion Forward Movement, expressed himself on this subject in the following emphatic terms: "The church of to-day is not sufficient in itself to attract men and boys from saloons and billiard halls, and it is worse than useless for the

* "Business Side of the Church."—Saturday Evening Post, Feb. 1, 1913.

church to preach against the immorality of the saloon until it can replace it, the billiard hall and the dance hall, with similar institutions under gentle guidance. The saloon is yet a social necessity. Men and young men must have a gathering place. That is a positive social law. The church is not attracting them, and cannot under its present conditions.

"You ministers pass too much time preaching what those fellows—the fellows who populate the saloons—would call Churchianity, to the exclusion of Christianity. You are too high and mighty to mingle in the slums with those who can find companionship nowhere outside of saloons.

"You who say that dancing is immoral are narrow and evil-minded. Dancing is a natural and enjoyable entertainment. You cannot keep boys and girls from dancing. Why try? Every church, every Sunday School, should have a dance hall in its parish home.

"Carom and pocket billiards and bowling are choice sports and amusements of boys and men. It took twenty years to overcome prejudices of the people to the installation of billiard

tables and bowling alleys in the Y. M. C. A. It took less than twenty days to realize the great good that these same condemned billiard tables were doing and were going to do for the boys. Again, I say that every church should have billiard tables.

"Why not, then, make billiards and bowling feeders to the church rather than to the saloon? It can be done. It will have to be done before the church will come into its own.

"You have seen that the church to-day cannot and does not attract men and boys. That being true, there is something wrong with the church.

"Why not right this wrong? Why not bring to pass these things, such as dancing and billiard playing, which will attract the young folk? I say, get them here. Use moving pictures. Get your picture films from the same film makers as do the moving picture theaters. Do not use religious pictures alone. They bore rather than attract. Convert your church into a social habitation—a place where men, women, boys and girls will delight to be."

Many conservative churchmen may regard

Mr. Strayer's views as somewhat radical and his statement of the case rather blunt. But, even so, there is still much food for reflection in his remarks. And the fact that he was chosen as the "Social Expert" of a national layman's movement makes his ideas representative of the laymen's point of view.

THE HALF-WAY STEP

At one time I feared that, while games in the church might draw young men there week nights, it would not secure their attendance at Sunday services; and, of course, the purpose of the church is not merely to amuse. But when I reflected that big business houses will offer certain articles for sale as "leaders" at a price which actually nets them a loss in order to induce the public to "get the habit" of frequenting their store,—to merely become familiar with the pathway, or rather the street, that leads to their place of business,—I began to appreciate something of the value placed upon first steps in the desired direction.

Moreover, something besides mere familiar-

ity with the road leading to the church and the habit of wending their way in that direction is awakened in the bosom of those for whom amusement and pleasure are provided by the church. It is only human that such amusements and interest shown should create a kindly feeling revealing itself in the young men's attitude toward the minister and the church. Such an attitude means accessibility of approach for the minister at least and an inclination on the part of the young men to reciprocate the minister's kindness. The natural way in which such reciprocation might be manifested would be to boost those things in which the minister is interested. And young men know very well that the one thing of vital interest to the minister is to increase his congregation. Although they come to church only to please him, therefore, every church worker and every one familiar with church opportunities for service are aware that half the battle is to "get the young men out."

In other words, the chasm between the young man and the church to-day has become so wide that a *half-way step* seems necessary. At this

half-way point, minister and young men must meet,—a point representing a community of interests between the two factors we are trying to bring together. At the present moment there seems to be no other interest in common quite so easily appropriated as that of innocent and wholesome games. Here young men and the minister may meet in mutual pleasure and fellowship. From this point the young man can step across the remaining portion of the chasm.

Changing the young man's feelings and inclinations toward the church, familiarizing him with the way that leads there, and establishing a personal acquaintance with community of interest between him and the minister, are influences, therefore, which we cannot afford to despise. It is only natural to desire to hear the man preach with whom we have had a mutually pleasant fellowship in other spheres of human interest.

CHAPTER VII

EXAMPLES AND TESTIMONY

WEST PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA

AMONG the few concrete examples of the actual practice of these advices among Protestant denominations, there is perhaps none which more definitely illustrates whether games in the church week nights will increase the attendance at Sunday services than that of the West Park Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. We quote at some length from a report of the work by the pastor, Rev. Dr. Grant Hopper, because it makes clear the feasibility of the project in various particulars. Concerning his church game-room, he says:—

“Years ago we dreamed a dream. We saw the drift of things in the great wail of the church that men and women would not attend



REVEREND CHARLES GRANT HOPPER,
PASTOR, WEST PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

service in God's house on the Lord's Day with any large measure of faithfulness. We watched boys and girls grow into men and women, and at a critical period in their lives feel the strong pull of the world and yield to it and surrender in large measure their Sabbath School associations, and give only perfunctory attention to the service of the church.

"We studied conditions as they were, and watched the effect of good men, not necessarily identified with the church, but deeply interested in boys, and good women heartily interested in girls. Boys' clubs and girls' clubs have sprung up, like mushrooms, all over the country. Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. have carried on an ever-increasing work of usefulness and helpfulness, taking a new hold on the driftwood from our Sabbath Schools. Educators far and near have been pleading for community recreation centers, and still other forces were working here and achieving there, and in the midst of all this agitation and successful effort stood the church, approving, it is true, but passive, as an organized factor itself, doing little or nothing in taking the initiative toward her

own working out of the problem, and the holding of her boys and girls, along lines approved by worthy men the world over, and successfully wrought out by organizations outside of the churches, though in no sense antagonistic to the church or our Sabbath Schools.

"In the height of all these we dreamed, we longed for the day when the best and most attractive features of Y. M. C. A.'s and boys' clubs would become an incorporated part of our church work; that a great playground for our own boys and girls might be realized which would hold them fast. . . .

"MEMBERSHIP.—Those eligible to membership are members of the West Park Presbyterian Church, Congregation or Sabbath School. Membership is of the following classes:

"1. *Sustaining*.—Any person giving \$5 per year or more for the sustaining of the work.

"2. *Senior*.—Any male or female member of the Church, Congregation or Sabbath School, over nineteen years of age, paying \$3 per year.

"3. *Intermediate*.—Any male or female, fourteen years of age to nineteen years of age, paying \$2 per year.

"4. *Junior*.—Any boy or girl of our Sabbath School, under fourteen years of age, paying \$1 per year.

"GENERAL RULES.—Gentlemanly conduct is required at all times. Boys and men should always remove their hats while in the building, remembering that they are in the presence of ladies, and not in an ordinary clubhouse. The use of tobacco in the building is absolutely forbidden.

"At first a shuffleboard was one of the principal amusements for the boys, but this year two pocket-billiard tables have been substituted. The rules governing these are:

"*Rates*.—Games will be charged for at the rate of two and one-half cents per game per player, and must be paid for in advance at the beginning of the game. Tables may be rented by a party of two or more (one of whom must be a member of the West Park Church Club), at the rate of sixty cents per hour; but for not more than one hour at a time, if the table is

wanted by other members of the West Park Church Club.

"GENERAL RULES.—Ladies' nights, Tuesday and Thursday evenings of each week ladies will be given preference in use of tables.

"*Boys.*—No boy under sixteen years of age will be allowed to play unless upon receipt of permission from his parents to the governors of the building. And no older boy will be allowed to play if his parents are known to object.

"*Club Members.*—Members of the West Park Church Club will always be shown preference in use of tables. No table will be permitted to be used unless at least one member of the church club is in the party of players.

"*No Gambling.*—Each player must pay for his own game, except in such cases as where the governor in charge of the room is convinced that there is no spirit or intent of 'loser pay for the game.' Any violation of this rule will be dealt with seriously, as the governors of the building are determined that no spirit of gambling shall be permitted.

"*Open Games.*—All games shall be 'open,' except when tables are rented by the hour.



WEST PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND RECREATION BUILDING, PHILADELPHIA.

"Learners and Inexperienced Players.—

While learners and inexperienced players are to be encouraged to use the tables, yet at the same time they must be reasonable in the time consumed in playing their game, and either very few or no 'scratches' should be counted in such a game. The fairest way for learners to play would be by the hour, making up a party of their own.

"The governor in charge of the room is expected to collect the tickets for each game before it is started; to look after the general conduct of the room; to see that none of the privileges, especially the length of time consumed in playing a game, are abused, and his authority in the room must be looked upon as absolute, and as representing the governing board of the John H. Converse Memorial Building.

"ON SUNDAYS.—On Sundays the smaller rooms in the building are used for the Senior Sunday School Classes. A space between the church and the hall will be utilized some time in the future for a swimming pool.

"An important phase of such an organization

as is being conducted in this West Philadelphia Church undoubtedly concerns the finances. The total cost of the building is \$25,000, of which there stands a mortgage of \$16,000, which will gradually be reduced. The auditor's report for the past year shows clearly that the building is being conducted on a paying basis; in fact, is supporting itself. The financial annual report is as follows:

Receipts.

From membership tickets.....	\$ 880.00
Pastor's Aid Society Donation.....	432.00
Shuffle-Board Receipts	*194.96
Basket-Ball Receipts	181.35
Entertainments	171.60
Sale Ice Cream and Candy.....	39.00
Interest on Bank Account.....	5.36
Building Com. Bal. turned over.....	1.80
Donation	18.60
J. F. Plummer, financial secretary.....	5.00
Total	\$1,929.67

* After substituting billiards for the shuffle board, the income from this item was increased from \$16.00 per month to \$79.00 per month.

Payments.

To interest on mortgage.....	\$ 864.00
Coal	217.30
Two Instructors	111.70
Janitor	145.00
Equipment	165.70
Insurance	124.00
Electric Light and Gas.....	163.80
Water Rent	7.95
Printing and Stationery.....	27.20
Shuffle-Board Expenses	2.75
Game-Room Expenses.....	4.50
Reading-Room Expenses.....	42.25
Basket-Ball Expenses	1.25
Maintenance Expenses	24.52
Entertainment Expenses	15.80
Balance	11.95
Total	\$1,929.67

“Likewise there is a social side to the innovation of the billiard room under church supervision. Young men interested to a certain extent in the club, but clinging to outside billiard rooms, have now transferred their individual allegiance to the club.

“The churches of to-day must take extraordinary steps to hold the young women and

young men, and it is by the social side that they can be reached and helped. Since the gymnasium and game-rooms have been provided in the Converse Building, our already large number of young people has been greatly increased, our boys and girls kept off the street, and our young men and young women have found harmless entertainment and physical advantage, for which many parents in our congregation are sincerely grateful.

“GOOD FOR MEETINGS, TOO.—*We feel that in our section we have solved the problem facing most Churches to-day, in caring for the young folk and keeping them within the fold.*”

JESUIT FATHERS' CHURCH, CHICAGO

Another most conspicuous example of a play and club room in churches is that of the Jesuit Fathers' Church, which maintains the largest parochial school in Chicago. Concerning the results, the Rev. Father Thomas Nolan says: “Billiard tables have brought more young men into my church than all the preaching that ten priests could do for ten years. I wouldn't let



GYMNASIUM IN CONNECTION WITH THE WEST PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

the tables be taken out for anything in the world. The influence they bring to bear on the young men, and particularly the boys, is a thousand-fold. Why, before the tables were installed very few boys came into the church. Now they all want to come, and we sometimes have difficulty in handling the crowds."

Moreover, a boy is a boy, whether Catholic or Protestant. In all churches the young-man problem is about the same proposition. The young man cares mighty little in these days for denominations or creeds, and the chance of any church to win him is about equal to that of any other. Opportunity for the minister of any church to attract and serve young men is mostly the spoils of the power to observe. It is somewhat encouraging to note, too, that some Protestant churches are beginning to look more kindly upon young men's recreations. According to the press clippings before me, there are many actual cases of billiards, indoor baseball, boxing and punching-bags in connection with Protestant churches to-day.

Benjamin Young, of the First Methodist Church of Portland, Ore., says: "I don't see

why the Devil should corner every good thing. I know of no finer game than billiards, and believe that it is an absolutely clean sport. I play and enjoy the game of billiards, and I don't care who knows it. I think that we should mix religion with every-day matters. There is no question but that the game should be divorced from the evil surroundings that now attend it in many cases and the game should be played where all the other influences are right. But, as for the game itself, I think it is fine. The churches should give more attention to such things and lend their support to games that tend to improve the wits and muscles of the players."

Bishop Scadding, of the Episcopal Church, says: "I believe that billiards or bowling, or any other game, is commendable. We have billiard tables in the parish house and I know that it heads off many young men who would otherwise be compelled to seek amusement in low dives or saloons."

"Pastor" John, of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Chicago, has a gymnasium, billiard tables, and other amusements in connection with his

church. Results: By actual count at a recent Sunday morning service there were 525 total attendance, and of this number 135 were young men.

Rev. A. F. Anderson, of the Normal Park Baptist Church, Chicago, has a Young Men's Sunday School Class of 125 average attendance. Needless to say that there are a gymnasium and indoor games in connection with his church, for the reason that such results are not obtained nowadays otherwise.

Rev. B. H. Reutopohler, of the Congregational Church of Salem, Ore., who has billiards in his church, observes a marked increased attendance of young men.

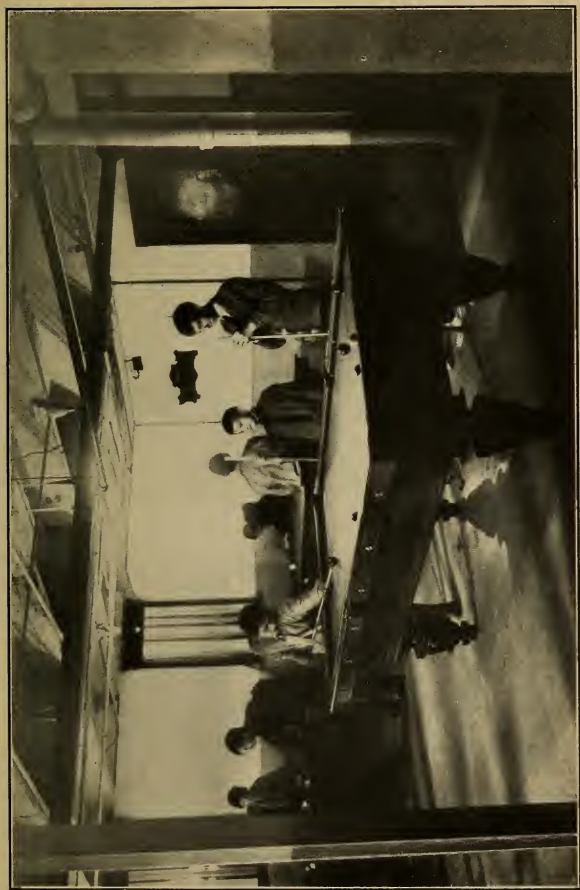
Occasionally a minister loses his patience, as in the case of Rev. W. A. Gardner, pastor of the Christian Church, Olathe, Kans., who said, in a public address before his townsmen: "You are driving the young men to the city because you are too stingy with your dirty dollars to provide decent amusement. You expect the boys to sit here and twirl their fingers. Well, they won't do it. Make this town worth living

in and you won't have to worry about the boys leaving."

Rev. Dr. Maurice P. Finales, First Baptist Church, Franklin, Pa., says: "The church that would win men these days must be up and doing. And, while I do not hold that it must offer them all the pleasures the world does, it must give them those which do not run counter to Christianity. I know the idea of a billiard room on church property will shock some deacons, but they must come to it or their church will lose its position."

Prof. Thomas Edwin Spencer, Supt. of Public Schools, St. Louis, Mo., referring to the vice problem of that city, says: "Plainly, the solution of the problem which confronts the West End is to provide sane, healthful, educating amusements, which will prove counter-attractions to the undesirable Delmar 'White Way.' "

The growing popularity of the apartment house, which is depriving children and young persons of yards in which to play, has caused the pastor of the Second Baptist Church, St. Louis, to throw open one of the buildings of



ONCE A CHURCH BASEMENT CATCH-ALL—NOW FURNISHED WITH SECOND-HAND BILLIARD TABLES.

his costly church plant as a gymnasium and clubroom. Pocket and billiard tables are among the billiard equipment of the building. Justifying this departure, the Rev. H. F. Evans, assistant pastor, said: "We are moved to this step because we believe also in a religion of joy and of the present life. Many of the boys and girls of the West End apartment houses have little chance for play except in the streets. The Church feels the responsibility of giving every possible opportunity for the development of each side of the child's nature."

SAVES BOYS' SUNDAY-SCHOOL CLASS

Here is my book in miniature: the whole argument is epitomized in this definite concrete fact. It is a typical incident portraying a general situation, and it can be duplicated by the active pastor everywhere:—

"We had difficulty in getting a teacher who could hold a class of boys of fourteen years. Several had tried it and failed. I gave up twenty girls just to teach that class of seven boys. At the close of the first lesson I asked

them whom they wanted for teacher. You. I will teach you on three conditions. The first is that you come to the manse and play pool with me Thursday night from 6.30 to 8.30. The second is that you bring your Bibles and have Bible study class till 9 o'clock. And the third is that you cease waiting for one another at the chapel door, but come in and take your places in the class like men.

"No further difficulty with that class! Now, on Thursday evening I did not teach those boys any new tricks. They all knew how to play pool, and all but one of them had learned at places where they had no business to go. *Either we will take the lead as churches and furnish such recreation as this generation elect for their amusements, or the saloons and gambling halls will do this work for us.*"

REV. SILAS E. PERSONS, D.D.

Cazenovia, N. Y.

Before me are the accounts of dozens of others. May their numbers increase. The tendency should soon become a general move-

ment. For therein lies the help of the city in solving the problem of its vice districts, the means by which the rural communities can check their young people's cityward drift, the magnet of the home in retaining "our son," and the hope of the church to win young men.

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